



State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Shepard Building
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Enclosure 4a
December 20, 2016

Ken Wagner, Ph.D.
Commissioner

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TO: Members of the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education
FROM: Ken Wagner, Ph.D., Commissioner *KW*
RE: **Response to Council December 6th Charter Questions**

At the December 6th, 2016 meeting, the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education asked the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) to further analyze the following issues: 1) a further analysis of the programmatic impact Achievement First's expansion request will have on Providence; 2) the population of special education students at Achievement First and performance of non-special education students, both compared to Providence Public Schools; and, 3) the ways in which charters are successfully collaborating with school districts.

Please see RIDE's analysis for each of these questions below:

1) Further Analysis of Programmatic Impact of Achievement First's (AF) Expansion Request on the Providence Public School District (PPSD):

In response to a Council member's question at the December 6, 2016 meeting, RIDE prepared an analysis of potential staffing cuts to PPCSD. The projections have severe limitations, as only Providence officials are aware of the variables under consideration to determine the actual impact of Achievement First's expansion on staffing levels. These projections are formulaic in nature and provide information that projects the impact in accordance with the City Auditor's Report and the classroom teacher to student ratio as reported to RIDE by PPCSD.

School Year	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2026-27
AF PVD Enrollment Increase from Expansion	0	+229	+620	+936	+1,217	+1,877
FTE reduction for every 52 students ⁱ	0	4	12	18	23	36
FTE reduction for every 26 students ⁱⁱ	0	9	24	36	47	72
FTE reduction for every 17 students ⁱⁱⁱ	0	13	36	55	72	110

Furthermore, any potential reductions in staff would be offset by any enrollment increase over the same time period and the impact would be mitigated by ten years of planning and natural staff attrition.

Finally, Providence will remain a large district, even with full AF expansion, so, based on the offerings of other large and comparable districts, there is no reason to believe PPVD would need to eliminate any of the program offerings provided in other comparably sized and comprised districts.

2) Analysis of Achievement First's Special Education Student Population and Performance of Non-Special Education Students, as compared to Providence Public School District:

Based on October 1st, 2016 enrollment counts, 8% of Achievement First's student population had an IEP compared to 15% of PPSD's total student enrollment. RIDE pulled updated data on December 1st from the special education census and found that when looking specifically at grades K-4, 9% of Achievement First's student population had an IEP compared to 13% in PPSD grades K-4. Further, when looking specifically at only kindergarten (who make up the significant majority of students new to Achievement First in the 2016-17 school year), 11% of Achievement First kindergarten students have an IEP compared to 12% in PPSD.

RIDE then analyzed the K-4 special education student population as of December 1st for both Achievement First and PPSD to identify the proportions of students served by disability classification. Achievement First and PPSD proportionately serve students with similar disabilities with two notable exceptions:

- PPSD serves proportionately significantly more students classified as Developmentally Delayed (24% of special education population) compared to Achievement First (<20%, note: specific % cannot be provided due to insufficient n-size).
- Achievement First serves proportionately significantly more students classified as Speech/Language Impaired (60%) compared to PPSD (40%)

RIDE also analyzed the % of students without an IEP that met or exceeded expectations on the 2016 PARCC Assessments for Achievement First and PPSD. See below for %s:

LEA	ELA	Math
Achievement First	47.1%	77.0%
PPSD	25.2%	26.9%

3) Analysis of Charter-District Collaboration for Charters that Submitted Expansion Requests:

Achievement First:

Achievement First considers itself an "open source" organization, meaning that schools are free to share all of their professional resources and experience with partners, host districts, and others. In Providence, Achievement First currently participates in the annual enrollment process open to all families for Kindergarten. In addition, for the second year in a row, PPSD's Curriculum and Instruction Team has spent a full day at Achievement First observing and participating in "data day", a full day of professional development focused on conducting a data-deep dive for each

student to determine how Achievement First will adjust its teaching to meet that student's needs. Achievement First is also in the process of exploring opportunities to share professional development with PPSD regarding their math curriculum and student engagement practices.

Nationally, Achievement First has created a dedicated Team Partnerships, charged with identifying and creating opportunities to share with and learn from other organizations, including traditional public school districts, other charter management organizations, and other nonprofit organizations. Currently, Achievement First's Team Partnerships runs initiatives, including the Residency Program for School Leadership. Designed originally as a collaboration with New Haven Public Schools in CT, Achievement First and its host public school districts have been working together to recruit and develop stellar assistant principals, coaches, and teacher leaders to serve as the next generation of outstanding principals for the highest-need public schools in our communities.

Paul Cuffee School:

The Providence Parent Academy, a joint venture of Paul Cuffee School and the Providence Public School Dept., was launched in spring of 2015. The Parent Academy offers an array of free classes to Providence parents, with Spanish language translation, interpretation and childcare for most courses. The Academy offers a menu of parent workshops and on-going training courses on a broad range of topics such as healthy eating on a budget, preparing your kindergartner for school, stress reduction strategies, parent leadership training, adult English classes, and how to communicate with your teen. The courses are offered in partnership with community organizations that include, but are not limited to, United Healthcare, Roger Williams University School of Law, The Women's Medicine Collaborative, RI Parent Information Network, RI Family Literacy Initiative, and Youth in Action.

The goal of the Providence Parent Academy is to help parents become full partners in their children's education by building upon their skills, knowledge and capacity to positively impact educational outcomes for their children. Research shows that students with engaged families exhibit faster rates of literacy acquisition, earn higher grades and test scores, have better social skills and behavior, and are less likely to be absent from school. Recognizing this positive correlation between family engagement and student outcome, and driven by the fact that both draw from the same students and families, PCS and PPSD came together in search of a more effective way to increase parent engagement for all Providence families.

Segue Institute for Learning:

Segue Institute for Learning has collaborated with a variety of partners throughout the 2015-2016 school year. Segue shared best-practices, resources and strategies with fellow schools, postsecondary institutions, and community partners. Partners include, but are not limited to, the RI College Crusade, Sojourner House, Roger Williams, RI College, Providence College, and Dorcas Place. Further, Segue Institute for Learning has been working with Central Falls School District leadership to solidify commonalities rather than differences – such as ELL protocols and practices. Conversations have focused on areas for stronger collaboration such as professional development.

The Greene School:

The Greene School has been nationally recognized for its work with expeditionary learning school model. The Greene School has sought to share their best practices by presenting at various school workshops and conferences both within and outside of Rhode Island. In addition, The Greene School recently brought in consultants from the University of Pittsburgh Institute for Learning to offer math professional development to The Greene School and other Rhode Island public schools. The Greene School will continue to offer this collaborative professional development opportunity with traditional district schools. Additional partners that the Greene School has worked with includes the Providence NAACP, the Youth Restoration Project, Providence College.

The Learning Community:

In 2012, the New York Times recognized The Learning Community's efforts to collaborate with the Central Falls School District to promote dramatic improvements in the reading scores of the public schoolchildren from kindergarten to second grade. To continue their collaborative efforts and sharing best-practices, The Learning Community formed The Teaching Studio. The Teaching Studio is a new center for professional development bringing targeted, grade-level specific professional development directly to teachers in classrooms through one-on-one coaching, workshops at their grade level, and units of study and lessons tested in a real public school. The Teaching Studio is led by The Learning Community's practicing classroom teachers. The Teaching Studio will host its fourth annual conference in Spring 2017.

The Learning Community has also continued their partnerships with the districts of Woonsocket and Smithfield. The Learning Community has worked with both districts to train reading specialists, work directly with classrooms teachers in grades K-5 in reading instruction, establishing and implementing supporting quality reading assessment systems, and supporting the principals of all partner schools with school-wide data analysis. In October 2015, The Center for Collaborative Education found that The Learning Community's work with the Woonsocket and Smithfield school districts resulted in a 14% increase from 2014 to 2015 in the percentage of students reading at grade level at the partnering schools.

Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts:

Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts is leading the way in arts-integration practices. To that end, Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts shares their best practice with community partners, including, but not limited to, FirstWorks, Community Music Works, Brown University, and Opera Providence OPERAtunity. Further, Trinity Academy for the Performance Arts is an active participant within the Providence artistic community. Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts invites local art partners into the school to blend the school and stakeholders instructional practices, thus improving overall instruction for both the school and the partner.

ⁱ The Providence City Auditor's first analysis projects that PPSD may lay off 1 teacher for every 52 students that enroll in Achievement First.

ⁱⁱ Councilman Samul D. Zurier's "Report on Fiscal Impacts to Providence Public Schools From Proposed Achievement First Expansion" indicated that in Providence, the standard regular education class size is 26 students. This scenario projects PPSD may lay off 1 teacher for every 26 students that enroll in Achievement First.

ⁱⁱⁱ PPSD reported data via InfoWorks indicates that the 2014-15 Teacher-to-Student ratio for classroom teachers was one teacher for every 17 students. This model projects that PPSD may lay off one classroom teacher position for every 17 students that enroll in Achievement First.